

140 COMPLETED PROJECTS · BRITISH COLUMBIA AND ALBERTA · 15 YEARS

What independent research found about Western Canada's union skilled trades

PRESENTED BY



17%

more productive

Open shop



Union



About one-sixth more work done for the same labour effort (open shop indexed to 100, union at 117).

16%

lower construction labour cost

Open shop



Union



Even though union wage rates were higher, because the work got done more productively.

7%

lower total project cost, on average

Open shop



Union



About \$70,000 saved on every \$1 million. Labour averaged 43 per cent of total project cost.

3% vs 18%

of projects hit by labour shortages: about 1 in 30 versus nearly 1 in 5

Union: just over 3 in 100 projects



Open shop: 18 in 100 projects



15 years

of completed projects in B.C. and Alberta, authorised between 2010 and 2024.

79 · 61

union and open shop projects compared, mainly at existing refining, chemical, utility and civil sites.

25,000+

projects in IPA's database. IPA states it alone was responsible for the analysis.

The value of skilled work is measured by what gets built. Canada's major projects deserve the most productive workforce.

Project labour agreements with the building trades give owners direct access to this skilled, available workforce.

Source: Independent Project Analysis, *Quantifying the Value of Union Labour in Construction Projects*, September 2026, prepared for Western Canada Skilled Metal Trades. Projects at existing industrial sites, about C\$150,000 to over C\$15 million, authorised 2010 to 2024. Presented by the Building Trades of Alberta, the BC Building Trades and Western Canada Skilled Metal Trades.